

The Rocky Hill Town Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2015 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall. Mayor Henry Vassel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance: Deputy Mayor Nadine Bell, Councilor Meg Casasanta, Councilor Guy Drapeau, Councilor Joe Kochanek, Councilor Tim Moriarty (Entered at 7:13 p.m.), Councilor Frank Szeps and Councilor Cathy Vargas. Also present: Town Manager Guy Scaife and Finance Director John Mehr.

Those absent: Councilor Bill MacDonald.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

Mayor Vassel asked if anyone from the public wished to speak and no one did.

Appointments/Resignations

The Majority Party and the Minority Party had none. Mayor Vassel said he had one. Councilor Szeps will be a liaison from the Town Council to State Representative Guerrera and State Senator Doyle to help them along in the process about Governor Malloy speaking lately about the Towns get less State money. Mayor Vassel wants to make sure that Rocky Hill's education doesn't suffer because they have worked hard to get where they are. He has a few other things that they can look at too (i.e. the letter they are in the process of sending for the seniors). Councilor Casasanta asked if there would be any opportunity for State Representative Guerrera and State Senator Doyle to come before the Town Council to speak to those issues because it would be nice for the Town Council to go back and forth with the questions they might have. Councilor Szeps said yes. Mayor Vassel said absolutely but he wants to get all of their questions together first in case they won't be able to get State Representative Guerrera and State Senator Doyle to come before them multiple times. They can all work with Councilor Szeps on this.

Approval of Minutes

A. Town Council Meeting – 1/20/15

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 20, 2015 meeting of the Town Council. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vargas and adopted unanimously by those present.

Subcommittee Reports

A. Finance

Councilor Vargas said the Finance Committee met on February 11, 2015 and two of the items discussed could be found this evening under New Business Item D. and Item E. The Finance

Committee was also given an update on the Special Rec Fund, of which \$300,000 had been moved from at the end of last year to nonrecurring. That fund will be monitored over the next few months because it currently has a negative balance so they are going to see if too much money was moved out or if this is due to cash flow. She will inform the Town Council if some money will need to be moved back from nonrecurring at some point to cover the deficit.

Rocky Hill has received all of its State Aid through this month that was based on the Fiscal Year '14-'15 budget.

Councilor Vargas said the Tax Collector had given an update on delinquent property tax collections. The Tax Collector has come up with a great process and she is following up on a monthly basis with the Finance Committee. There are fourteen properties that will be placed on a tax sale. The process for this has been started. This gives multiple opportunities to these taxpayers to start payment programs before this is finalized. The Motor Vehicle Grand List for 2012 and prior years was sent to the Credit Bureau. The collection agency is in the process of collecting delinquent taxes and the Tax Collector had informed them the Tax Office is receiving multiple phone calls and payments due to this.

The Finance Committee asked for a snapshot of the balance in the nonrecurring account. There was approximately \$2,700,000 as of July 1, 2015 and \$300,000 was added to that. A little less than \$1,200,000 has been spent on school system projects primarily. The balance as of the end of last month was approximately \$1,900,000.

B. Public Safety

Deputy Mayor Bell said there was a Public Safety Committee meeting this evening prior to the Town Council's meeting. A lot had been said about snow banks and sidewalks. She urged everyone in the public to make sure that their sidewalks are shoveled, as well as that fire hydrants are shoveled out.

The RHPD stated that the Microwave Project has been completed finally.

The RHFD, RHPD and Town Manager Scaife will be putting a five year apparatus plan together and they would like to have an initial planning session between the Public Safety Committee and the Finance Committee to go through this to see if this needs to get moved to the Town Council.

There had been an accident between a newer ambulance and a deer on the ambulance's way back from a call. There were no injuries to the people in the ambulance. This ambulance is getting repaired.

Mayor Vassel said he had been with the RHFD at an accident at the intersection of Pratt Street and Dividend Road about one week ago. He asked Town Manager Scaife if they could look at the feasibility of having Pratt Street closed where Center Cemetery is because it seems like 99% of the accidents involve someone shooting across there and this would be eliminated if they were to have people only being able to take a right or a left off of Pratt Street onto Dividend Road or even just being able to take a right there. Town Manager Scaife said this can be looked at but

this will limit people's choices. Councilor Kochanek said this would require people to go down Dividend Road if they wanted to go south on Main Street. Mayor Vassel said this would probably be better than what they have now.

C. Government Operations Committee

Deputy Mayor Bell said the Government Operations Committee also had a meeting prior to this Town Council's meeting. The RHHS Renovate As New project is moving along nicely and she urged the Councilors to attend the ceremony at 4:00 p.m. tomorrow because all of the steel is up for the major addition.

A tremendous amount of work has been done and completed in all of the schools for the summer projects. Deputy Mayor Bell mentioned these projects. Quite a bit of money has been spent at the schools to bring them up-to-date. There will also be two motions coming forward for Item B. and Item F. under New Business this evening.

D. Land Acquisition & Farmland Preservation

Councilor Szeps said the Town is seeking the required appraisal of a current farm, which is a total of forty-one acres, in the Town Council's effort to acquire land and preserve farmland in Rocky Hill. This farm is on their list of properties to preserve or purchase. The Open Space Land Acquisition & Farmland Preservation Subcommittee hopes to be presenting an offer to the Town Council or the ability to make an offer on this depending on a favorable appraisal.

E. Senior Affairs Committee

Councilor Vargas said the Senior Affairs Committee had a meeting at 5:00 p.m. this evening. Town Manager Scaife had made a follow-up presentation to one that he had made last month. He proposed a number of questions and this Committee asked the Senior Task Force to come up with short term, medium term and long term goals that they can present to them and then this can be brought forward to the Town Council. This Committee's next meeting will be this April.

Mayor Vassel realizes that the seniors have been waiting for action for years. A dialogue has now been opened and some goals have been set. The Town Council is definitely on this and the discussion will keep moving.

Mayor Vassel requested that Item E. be moved up before Item A. under New Business.

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to move New Business Item E. (Discussion and Possible Action re: Emergency replacement of 2 Parks and Recreation vehicles –Town Manager) ahead of New Business Item A. (Discussion and Possible Action re: Resolution of Endorsement and Authorization of the OPM Regional Performance Incentive Program) on the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vargas and adopted unanimously by those present.

New Business

E. Discussion and Possible Action re: Emergency replacement of 2 Parks and Recreation vehicles – Town Manager

Mayor Vasel thanked the Parks and Recreation Department, the Highway Department and the custodians for their snow removal efforts. They have done a phenomenal job. Town Manager Scaife said the work has been very impressive and they have been very fortunate from a safety standpoint, as well as with regards to the vehicles holding up. He is hearing a lot from citizens who appreciate the quality of the maintenance of the roads during the winter period.

Town Manager Scaife told the Town Council that they had an emergency request in their packets for them to approve two vehicles for the Parks and Recreation Department. The Finance Committee had discussed this last week with considerable detail and gave their approval. The Parks and Recreation Department has eight vehicles, of which six are absolutely critical for winter maintenance. One of these is a critical vehicle which is a plow truck and also has a sander on it but this failed two weeks ago so this is down for snowplowing purposes. A 1985 truck was lost this past November and this was planning on being replaced this summer if it had held up. At that time, they were going to look at coming to the Town Council for a replacement of that truck because the use of that starts the latter part of March. There is favorable pricing, which is below the State bid pricing, for these two vehicles. There had been an error on the document that the Finance Committee had seen because it was showing an eight foot blade for one of the vehicles but a nine foot blade for the other vehicle and they want all of the vehicles to be consistent. There is money in their contingency fund for situations that are like this and he thinks this is an excellent use of this fund. The money for this would be spent this July if they didn't do this now so they wouldn't be saving anything and also if this isn't done now, their abilities to deal with the high quality of service they provide for snow removal would be crippled. Doing this now will also ensure high productivity come late March.

Councilor Vargas made a motion to approve the Resolution – Purchase – Two F-350 Ford Pickup Trucks. The motion was seconded by Councilor Szeps and adopted unanimously by those present. (Councilor Moriarty was now present for this motion and for the remaining motions at this meeting.)

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rocky Hill Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to make an emergency purchase for the following pickup trucks for the Parks Department.

1. 2015 Ford F-350 with a dump body 9 ft. fisher plow = \$39,375
2. 2015 Ford F-350 with a 9 ft. fisher plow = \$30,040
\$69,415

The Town would immediately purchase both trucks at a cost of \$69,415 from Monaco Ford, New London Turnpike, Glastonbury, CT. These trucks will be paid out of the Capital Improvements Budget for Vehicles – Parks Department, budget line 01-950-000-5764.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Finance Director is authorized to transfer, after April 1, 2015 per the Town Charter, \$69,415 from the Contingency/Reserves Budget – Contingency Account – budget line 01-900-300-5808 and transfer this amount to the Capital Improvements Budget for Vehicles – Parks Department, budget line 01-950-000-5764.

Before this motion was voted on, Councilor Vargas said the Finance Committee had gone through this last week and this price is down a little over \$2,000 from then. Councilor Szeps said they are getting “a heck” of a buy here and he supports this purchase wholeheartedly.

At this point, the motion was voted on.

A. Discussion and Possible Action re: Resolution of Endorsement and Authorization of the OPM Regional Performance Incentive Program

Town Manager Scaife said this is an enabling effort so that the Town can participate in CRCOG’s (Capitol Region Council of Governments) pursuit of grant money for two of the four areas that they are pursuing. This won’t commit the Town to anything.

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to approve the OPM Regional Performance Incentive Program Resolution of Endorsement & Authorization. The motion was seconded by Councilor Casasanta and adopted unanimously by those present.

Whereas Section 4-124s as amended by Section 251 and 253 of Public Act 13-247 passed by the Connecticut General Assembly provides statewide incentive grants to regional planning organizations for projects that involve shared services; and

Whereas the Capitol Region Council of Governments is acting as a convener and facilitator of service sharing projects around the CRCOG region; and

Whereas on November 12, 2014 the Policy Board of CRCOG passed a resolution authorizing development and submittal of an application package to the State Office of Policy and Management for funding under the Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program, on behalf of the Council’s member municipalities, and municipalities of other regions, which are participating in Council initiatives; and

Whereas, the Chief Elected Officials and municipal staff of the Capitol Region have developed a list of service sharing project proposals that will be included in this application package, to the benefit of individual municipalities and the region as a whole; and

Whereas the Town of Rocky Hill has expressed an interest in taking part in the project proposal(s) entitled:

1. Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory
2. Regional Service Management (CRM) System

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved that the Rocky Hill Town Council does hereby endorse the above referenced Regional Performance Incentive Program project proposal and authorizes the Town Manager to sign all necessary agreements and take all necessary actions to allow for the Town’s participation in the program.

Before this motion was voted on, Councilor Kochanek referred to the Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory. He asked who it would be from this Town who would be assigned to this

and who would receive and maintain the necessary training to successfully resolve the complex investigations of the agency. Town Manager Scaife said Rocky Hill might not participate in that and they need more clarity on that but they won't be able to participate if they don't bring this forward. They are under a deadline though to say if they would like to participate or not. Councilor Kochanek asked if this Resolution is just allowing them to investigate this further but it isn't committing them to this. Town Manager Scaife said this will allow them to participate if they choose to but they won't have this as an option if they don't pass this Resolution. Councilor Kochanek asked if additional personnel would be required if they were to take on that part of this Resolution. Town Manager Scaife said this would be done with the existing Staff.

At this point, the motion was voted on.

B. Discussion and Possible Action re: Resolution for revision to the building plan for the Rocky Hill High School renovate as new project

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to approve the Resolution – Approval- Revision to the Building Plan Specification for the Rocky Hill High School Renovate as New Project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Drapeau and adopted unanimously by those present.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Rocky Hill Town Council approves the revision to the Building Plan Specifications for the Rocky Hill High School renovate as new project in accordance with the Board of Education approving this revision at its January 15, 2015 meeting.

Report and Recommendation

The Board's Facilities Committee recommended that the Educational Specifications for the Rocky Hill High School renovate as new project be revised so that a total of 3 Tech Ed Classrooms/Labs for Power Management, Materials Processing and Engineer/Robotics be changed to a total of 2 Tech Ed Classrooms/Labs for CTE Technology CLAB of 3,100 square feet housing a materials lab, and small automotive room and a Robotics CLAB. The Board of Education approved this revision on January 15, 2015.

Before this motion was voted on, Councilor Moriarty apologized for being late to this meeting and for not being at the Government Operations Committee meeting this evening. He asked what the reason was for this and if there was any change in the money on this. Deputy Mayor Bell understands that there is no change in the money and she understands that this is precipitated by a Board of Education change that they passed in their educational specifications as to how they want to configure some of their curriculum and classroom space. Councilor Moriarty is happy to see the robotics and the smaller automotive lab. Councilor Drapeau thinks that Mike Sorano (Friar Associates) had stated that they want to make the automotive lab a little smaller, add robotics and then reconfigure the space so that they can have a lecture room. It was also indicated that this was caught early enough so there will be no additional cost.

At this point, the motion was voted on.

C. Discussion and Authorization for Town Manager to execute grant application re:

Academy Hall Structural Rehabilitation Project: Maintenance & Repair Grant, CT
Trust for Historic Preservation

Town Manager Scaife said this will be a project to have renovation done in the Academy Hall. This was in last year's CIP for \$30,000. They have come across a grant for this that could fund up to \$15,000 and this will allow them to pursue that.

Councilor Vargas made a motion that the Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to execute and apply for the CT Trust for Historic Preservation's "Maintenance & Repair Grant" program in the amount of \$15,000 for the purpose of supplementing costs associated with the current structural rehabilitation project for Academy Hall Museum. The motion was seconded by Councilor Kochanek and adopted unanimously by those present.

Before this motion was voted on, Councilor Moriarty asked if this project will be held up at all or if the cost of this will be offset if they get the grant. Town Manager Scaife said they are just going out to bid now to get firm quotes but they are anticipating that the pricing will be more than the amount of this. This grant would be up to \$15,000. Councilor Moriarty said all this grant will do will be that it will offset their cost a little if they get it.

At this point, the motion was voted on.

D. Discussion and Possible Action re: Acquiring/Leasing – Network Switches Upgrades
IT Department

Town Manager Scaife said this project, which is a critical part of their infrastructure, had been put in last year's budget but this needs the Town Council's approval because it is a lease and because of the size of it. He and Russ Ford (Director of IT and Facilities) wholeheartedly endorse this because it has been a recognized need for a long time. Town Manager Scaife said this had been presented two months ago to the Finance Committee but there was no leasing pricing so this was brought back last week to that Committee. They would have a lot at stake if their technology isn't upgraded.

Councilor Drapeau made a motion to approve the Resolution – Acquiring/Leasing – Network Switches Upgrades – IT Department. The motion was seconded by Councilor Kochanek and adopted unanimously by those present.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Rocky Hill Information Technology (IT) Department is authorized to acquire switching equipment for the Town's networking infrastructure at a cost of \$106,205.05 from Extreme Networks, Inc., 9 Northeastern Boulevard, Salem, NH 03079. The pricing for this equipment is in line with State of Connecticut bid price.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, or the Finance Director is authorized to enter into a three (3) year lease arrangement for the above networking equipment with Baystone Government Finance, associated with Citizens Bank. The Town will be making a down payment of \$10,000.00 upon delivery and 3 annual payments of \$34,155.37 in future budget years. This down payment will be charged to the IT Department Budget line (01-101-500-5736) for

Technical Equipment and the 3 installment payments will be charged to the Capital Improvement Budget project line (01-950-000-5741) for Equipment – IT Department in those budget years. At the end of the lease period, the Town will own the networking equipment outright.

F. Discussion and Possible Action re: funding for the Stevens School Fire Protection System and Elevator Project

Deputy Mayor Bell made a motion to approve the Resolution – Approval – Funding for the Stevens School Fire Protection System and Elevator Project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Drapeau and adopted unanimously by those present.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Rocky Hill Town Council authorizes the approval for the Myrtle H. Stevens Elementary School Fire Protection System and Elevator Building Project in the amount of \$706,500 from the Capital Improvement Account and \$40,318.69 from the Capital Nonrecurring Account for a total amount of \$746,818.69, which is sufficient to cover the local share of said project.

Report and Recommendation

The Board of Education is requesting that the Town Council adopts this resolution as it is part of the paperwork that is filed with the State in order for the Town to receive project cost reimbursement from the State.

Mayor's Report

The Rocky Hill Education Foundation held a fundraiser, "Cabaret Night", on February 7, 2015. Mayor Vasel thanked Lisa Marotta and Nicki Holt for a great evening.

Mayor Vasel mentioned that their overtime budget for snow has been exhausted. The streets will still be plowed though, etc.

Mayor Vasel said Councilor Szeps will be bringing reports of his meetings with State Senator Doyle and State Representative Guerrero to the Town Council to be sure they do everything possible to keep up with the levels they have become accustomed to receiving for Town services.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Scaife said the Town has moved to 100% biweekly payroll and 100% direct deposit this past week with no issues. An online system has also been implemented so that employees can check their payroll history, etc. There currently is also a printed document every payroll for each employee and this is available online too. This will eliminate some clerical activity and the cost of one hundred and fifty plus envelopes (for every pay period), etc.

They are in the thick of working on the budget for next fiscal year. Finance will have their first rollup this week. As far as Town Manager Scaife knows, the Department Heads all got their budget requests in by the target date of last Friday.

The Town goes out to bid every year for its healthcare and they got a price already that won't exceed 2.5%. The Town got a bid in from one vendor for a 1% increase. Town Manager Scaife said some areas have been identified where they can tweak the offering because their target is to be at a 0% increase and maybe lower. If changes are made, which will be minor, then these will all be in concert with their bargaining contracts and what they are allowed to do, as well as what they aren't allowed to do.

Town Manager Scaife said the Town has six bargaining unit contracts and a set of Personnel Rules. There are many differences between these seven documents. One set of employees gets one set of benefits and another set of employees gets a different set of benefits so he would call this discriminatory practices. Many of the bargaining unit representatives have spoken about the difficulty of one document speaking of a benefit of one nature and then there are additional comments five pages later for example. The huge effort for this major task has been formally kicked off last week and Dana McGee (Human Resources Director) will be driving this with the Staff and the bargaining unit members. Town Manager Scaife hopes when this is finished that this will be a model to move all of the contracts to and the administration will be simpler. There are two contracts that are up this year, two more will expire next year and then two more will expire the following year. Councilor Moriarty asked if their health insurance has to pay the "\$65 Belly Button fee" and if this is considered a Cadillac plan. Town Manager Scaife said the Town isn't at the Cadillac threshold which will kick in, in 2018. They won't have any Cadillac penalty if they are able to hold the rates down. Another provision is in there with regards to if the vast majority of their full time employees are being provided healthcare and he said this Town absolutely does this. He isn't seeing exposure to any type of violations or penalties of the Affordable Care Act. Councilor Moriarty said it is hard to believe that someone can do this for 1% because of healthcare having to take on children until they are twenty-six years old if they don't have health insurance, as well as there being no limits on coverage, etc. Town Manager Scaife said the industry went through years where there was double digit inflation and the rate of increase has gone down considerably. They have also have had a very positive claims' history. There is a good chance that their January and February claims' numbers will help to drop this number lower. Councilor Moriarty confirmed that their cost would increase if there were a number of heart attacks, etc. Mayor Vasel said it would for the next cycle. Town Manager Scaife said this is also looking at a three year average. Something in their favor is that they have one plan for all of their employees and they have a good consultant who has worked with them, as well as they have had favorable rates. It ensures that they will get good rates if they go out to bid on a frequent basis.

Adjournment

Councilor Szeps made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vargas and adopted unanimously by those present.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Booth

